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ABSTRACT

This booklet contains resources and suggestions to help secondary social studies teachers use popular music in the classroom. The ideas presented in popular songs should be examined in social studies classes because of the impact that contemporary songwriters have had on the shaping of American culture. The attitudes and values portrayed in modern tunes demand the reflective consideration of students because they strike at the heart of the major social and political issues of our time. The first few pages of the booklet discuss what popular music is and why it should be used in social studies classes. A listing of journal articles which offer stimulating and specific classroom strategies for introducing popular songs as social studies learning resources is provided. The remainder of the booklet outlines nine instructional units. Each unit is thematically organized and includes a specific question for reflective consideration, a set of concepts, suggestions for activities, and lists of popular music recordings and textbook readings which illustrate the theme. The themes are Black life in America; religious images; problems of youth; historical images; personal problems, women's liberation; technological change; social commentary; and future concerns. Activities vary. For example, students investigate a female singer's personal background, the history of her recording success, and the social and political themes of her songs. In another activity students develop lyrical biographies of socially alientated, politically powerless individuals. The booklet concludes with a selected discography. (Author/RM)

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Series 2
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How To Do It Series

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Popular Music in the Social Studies Classroom: Audio Resources for Teachers

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Perhaps only a Homer or Herodotus, or a first-rate folk-rock composer, could capture the tumult and tragedy of the last five years and measure their impact upon our lives.[1]

Many people question the value of listening to—let alone studying—popular songs. Their skepticism is usually based on unpleasant experiences related to modern music. It is undeniable that the volume of many contemporary recordings is deafening, the lyrics of some songs are repetitive and unimaginative, and the disc jockeys who scream jingles, blow horns, and heap senseless praise on tunes which are here today and gone tomorrow are annoying, if not repulsive. Yet, during the past decade a variety of scholars—musical theorists, psychologists, cultural historians, teachers of poetry and literature, sociologists, and linguists—have begun to examine carefully the meaning and social impact of popular music. This serious study is not just a fad. It marks a systematic attempt to understand the reasons for the immense popularity and influence of contemporary singers, songwriters, and songs.

Although experts on popular music disagree on many issues, there is consensus among them that the music of today is notably different from the music produced during any other period of human history. There are at least three reasons for this. First, the well-organized commercial distribution and radio broadcasting of popular recordings has created a vast listening public which is constantly exposed to music in cars, homes, elevators, and department stores.[2] The popular song is a universally available phenomenon. Second, technological advances in musical

[1]Warren G. Bennis, "Organic Populism," *Psychology Today*, III (February 1970), p. 52.

[2]R. Serge Denisoff, *Solid Gold: The Popular Record Industry* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1975), pp. 92-282.

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instruments and other sound-producing equipment (tape recorders, multi-track tapes, speakers, and amplifiers) have enabled singers to produce recorded material of such high quality that, as a recent audio-cassette advertisement declared, "You can't tell whether it's Ella Fitzgerald [live] or Memorex."[3] Finally, the quality of song lyrics has improved so dramatically that many English teachers refer to popular songwriters such as Bob Dylan, Billy Joel, Paul Simon, Carole King, Don McLean, Smokey Robinson, and Paul McCartney as "poets."[4] But, while the lyrics of some contemporary songs have earned rich praise as poetry, the words of other popular tunes have been condemned by politicians, theologians, and journalists as sinister propaganda tools.[5] The fact that so many modern singers, unlike their pre-1960 predecessors, tend to deal lyrically with controversial social and personal issues has heightened public concern about the influence of popular music. Antiwar chants, religious tunes, women's liberation melodies, and social-protest songs have dramatically depicted varying images of the United States. It is this descriptive aspect of contemporary music which is particularly valuable to social studies teachers.

What Is Popular Music?

Modern music is usually divided into several distinctive categories of songs or singing styles. Commentators frequently use familiar terms such as "blues," "rock," "jazz," "country," "folk," "rhythm and blues," "pop," "bluegrass," and "soul" to delineate different popular music sounds. Each of these terms possesses an element of descriptive validity; yet each category can also be too simplistic and potentially misleading. The task of defining the relatively narrow performing styles of singers such as Johnny Cash, B.B. King, Pete Seeger, or the Archies is fairly easy. The real problem arises when a student of popular music attempts to classify the rich, eclectic recording styles of such versatile singers as Elvis Presley, Ray Charles, or Barbra Streisand. The fact that these three artists have successfully performed songs in a variety of vocal styles inevitably creates confusion. To avoid such classification difficulty, though, the general term "popular music" employed here ignores stylistic, qualitative variation and includes those songs whose popular success since 1950 can be measured quantitatively in the "Top 100" record-rating charts of *Billboard* magazine. Put simply, the idea that a song is "popular" means that it is played frequently in private homes as well as at public places—at dances, in juke boxes, at restaurants, on radios, or wherever people gather.

When social studies students examine popular songs, the elements of melody, rhythm, harmony, acoustics, and form are of secondary importance to the content of the lyrics. This is not to imply that instrumental performances are of no significance as popular music. However, the social significance of a modern song is most often found in the verbal message which is delivered through the lyrics that a singer articulates. Content creates images. The particular image of complex society depicted in a single song may exert a stronger hold on a listener than the complex social reality which surrounds him or her. That is, songs of love, peace, and joy can generate a sense of well-being in an individual's mind, even though he or she may be suffering from a variety of personal or social problems. Likewise, songs may challenge the social status quo in order to stimulate the notion in the public mind that things are not going well.

Why Use Popular Music in Social Studies Classes?

Social studies instruction should culminate in the ability of a student to anticipate, understand, direct, evaluate, and live with constant social change. Most historians agree that the only thing that is less constant than human beings' interpretation of the past is their ability to comprehend objectively changing events of their own lifetimes. The study of contemporary society demands that both teachers and students acknowledge their myopic tendencies and actively seek new methods and materials for investigating changes in present-day life. One potentially beneficial resource for analyzing the causes and effects of social change is the medium of popular music. If social studies teachers are seeking to enhance their students' abilities in utilizing skills such as problem identification, information gathering, hypothesis formulating, and decision making, then the use of popular lyrics should provide a rich resource for classroom experimentation.

If social studies classrooms are to become forums for the reflective examination of the sources and results of social change, audio-media presentations must provide relevant personal and historical illustrations for students. This goal can be most easily accomplished by requesting that students provide their own records for classroom scrutiny. For instance, rather than introducing a scratchy version of "John Henry" to a history class in an attempt to illustrate the "Man versus Machine" conflict, a teacher should challenge his or her students to uncover more contemporary examples of social and personal reactions to automation as they are depicted in the lyrics of popular songs.

The initial task confronting the social studies teachers who plan to employ this popular music approach is to convince their students of the academic legitimacy of the investigation of songs and lyrics. The argument can be made that just as former civilizations are presently studied by anthropologists through remnants of pottery and art, by historians through the texts of military plans and political addresses, and by English teachers through pieces of prose and poetry, an analyst of contemporary society cannot afford to overlook the impact of the verbal imagery produced by the multi-million dollar American music industry. Although students may not be sophisticated enough to conduct vigorous content analyses of lyrics, they can recognize, define, and evaluate persistent themes and parallel-idea patterns in popular music. Once such themes are identified, a social studies teacher may ask a class to evaluate the validity of a position taken on a specific issue by a particular singer, thus initiating an examination of social change in such areas as religion, sex, war, alienation, poverty, and drugs.

The image of American society in contemporary lyrics is complex. While some songs praise patriotism (Merle Haggard's "Okee from Muskogee"), others condemn blind public support of military endeavors (Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Fortunate Son"). A few songs seem to support the pleasures of drug use (Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit"), while others condemn the sale of narcotics (Steppenwolf's "The Pusher") and stress the

[3]C. A. Schicke, *Revolution in Sound: A Biography of the Recording Industry* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), pp. 114-170 and 209-238; Ivan Berger, "One Hundred Years of Recording," *Stereo Review*, XXXIX (July 1977), pp. 62-65.

[4]David R. Pichaske (ed.), *Beowulf to Beatles: Approaches to Poetry* (New York: Free Press, 1972), pp. 3-50; Harold F. Mosher, Jr., "The Lyrics of American Popular Music: A New Poetry," *Popular Music and Society*, I (Spring 1972), pp. 167-176.

[5]Gary Allen, "More Subversion Than Meets the Ear," in *The Sounds of Social Change: Studies in Popular Culture*, edited by R. Serge Denisoff and Richard A. Peterson (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1972), pp. 151-166. Also see the September 14, 1970 speech by Spiro T. Agnew entitled "Talking Brainwashing Blues," which is reprinted in the same anthology, pp. 307-310.

deadly effects of speed and cocaine (Canned Heat's "Amphetamine Annie" and Steppenwolf's "Snowblind Friend"). Thus, the paradoxes of America's pluralistic society are accurately mirrored in the lyrics of contemporary songs.

Thematic categories can be easily expanded to illustrate specific points of social, political, or economic concern. For instance, the traditionally ambivalent attitude of young males and females toward the institution of marriage is reflected in numerous recordings. This fact can be dramatically demonstrated to students by playing the Stone Poney's "Different Drum" and Carly Simon's "That's The Way I've Always Heard It Should Be." One strength of this teaching approach is its flexibility. An instructor may approach a universally relevant social concept such as "marriage" from a variety of perspectives, depending upon the specific recordings employed. Once such a theme has been identified, some members of the class will inevitably attempt to outdo the teacher in assembling their own audio references. Thus, the original two-song dichotomy on the theme of marriage may be expanded through student suggestions to include "Worst That Could Happen" by the Brooklyn Bridge, "I'm Gonna Get Married" by Lloyd Price, "It's Too Soon To Know" by Etta James, and "Someone Saved My Life Tonight" by Elton John. Although this open-ended approach may initially disrupt preplanned class presentations, the enthusiasm generated among the students will more than compensate for occasional problems created by the need to expand the time assigned to a specific topic.

The following nine teaching units will illustrate approaches to several social, political, and personal issues as they are depicted in the words of popular songs. Contemporary music is undeniably a barometer of the attitudes, ideas, and values of the society in which it is produced. The images created by musicians and singing artists are not born in social vacuums. As one teacher has remarked:

> The process of examining the musical creation of a society and of determining what basic characteristics and outlooks are revealed by it is *part* of the larger process of assessing the quality of life fostered by the society. Music, after all, must have some relationship to the community from which it emerges—even if its relationship is reversed. Therefore, evaluating it must involve social viewpoint.[6]

Where Can Resources on Teaching Popular Music Be Obtained?

The use of popular music in the classroom has not received extensive academic commentary. Likewise, many librarians have been slow to adapt to the needs of social studies teachers and students by securing and utilizing contemporary recordings. The most significant exception to this situation is the excellent system for cataloging and circulating popular music materials developed by William Schurk, Sound Recording Archivist at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. The following articles offer stimulating and specific classroom strategies for introducing popular songs as social studies learning resources.

Patricia Averill, "How To Teach the Rock and Roll Generation What They Don't Want To Hear," *Popular Culture Methods*, III (Spring 1976), pp. 31-36.

Hugh E. Boyer, "A Report on the Use of Music in the History Classroom," *Network News Exchange*, IV (Spring 1979), pp. 19-20.

Roger L. Brown and Michael O'Leary, "Pop Music in an English Secondary School System." *American Behavioral Scientist*, XIV (January/February 1971), pp. 401-413.

Ray B. Browne, "The Uses of Popular Culture in the Teaching of American History," *Social Education*, XXXVI (January 1972), pp. 49-53.

Nora D. Christianson, "Teaching American History Through Its Period Music," *Social Studies*, XL (April 1949), pp. 156-165.

B. Lee Cooper, "Chuck Berry's Golden Decade . . .," *The History Teacher*, VIII (February 1975), pp. 300-301.

_____, "Examining Social Change Through Contemporary History: An Audio Media Proposal," *The History Teacher*, VI (August 1973), pp. 523-534.

_____, "Exploring the Future Through Popular Music," *Media and Methods*, XII (April 1976), pp. 32-35ff.

_____, "The Image of the Black Man: Contemporary Lyrics As Oral History," *Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center*, V (Spring 1978), pp. 105-122.

_____, "Les McCann, Elvis Presley, Linda Ronstadt, and Buddy Holly: Focusing on the Lives of Contemporary Singers," *Social Education*, XLIV (March 1980), pp. 217-221.

_____, "Liberal Education and Technology in Small Colleges: Popular Music and the Computer," *International Journal of Instructional Media*, VII (1979-80), pp. 25-35.

_____, "Popular Culture: Teaching Problems and Challenges," in *Popular Culture and the Library*, edited by Wayne A. Wiegand (Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1978), pp. 10-26.

_____, "A Popular Music Perspective: Challenging Sexism in the Social Studies Classroom," *Social Studies*, LXXI (March/April 1980), pp. 71-76.

_____, "Popular Music: A Creative Teaching Resource," *Audio-visual Instruction*, XXIV (March 1979), pp. 37-43.

_____, "Social Change, Popular Music, and the Teacher" and "Images of the Future in Popular Music: Lyrical Comments on Tomorrow," in *Ideas for Teaching Gifted Students: Social Studies*, edited by Jackie Mallis (Austin, Texas: Multi-Media Arts, 1979), pp. 9-19 and 97-108.

Frederick E. Danker, "Folksongs in the High School Classroom," *Sing Out!*, XIII (February-March 1963), pp. 16-17.

Harry Dhand, "Musical Reflections of Canada's History," *Social Education*, XXXV (October 1971), pp. 624-627.

John E. DiMeglio, "Music in World History Classes," *The History Teacher*, IV (January 1971), pp. 54-56.

David Dufty and John Anthony Scott, "How To Use Folk Songs." (Washington, D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies, 1969).

M. Foster Farley, "Music and Liberty," *Musical Heritage Review*, I (November 21, 1977), pp. 16-18ff.

David Feldman, "How To Teach Students About Something They Already Know More About Than You Do: Some Approaches to Teaching Rock Music," *Popular Culture Methods*, III (Spring 1976), pp. 22-31.

Eric P. Johnson, "The Use of Folk Songs in Education: Some Examples of the Use of Folk Songs in the Teaching of History, Geography, Economics, and English Literature," *The Vocational Aspect of Education*, XXI (Summer 1969), pp. 89-94.

John Kimball, "Music and the Teaching of American History," *Social Education*, XXVII (January 1963), pp. 23-25.

Anne W. Lyons, "Creative Teaching in Interdisciplinary Humanities: The Human Values in Pop Music," *Minnesota English Journal*, (Winter 1974), pp. 23-31.

David E. Morse, "Avant-Rock in the Classroom," *English Journal*, LVIII (February 1969), pp. 196-200ff.

Howard F. Mosher, Jr., "The Lyrics of American Pop Music: A New Poetry," *Popular Music and Society*, I (Spring 1976), pp. 167-176.

Robert Reid, "Music and Social Problems: A Poster Series." Portland, Maine: J. Weston Walch, Publisher, 1971.

_____, "Philosophy Teacher Tunes in Students With Rock Music," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, (February 20, 1977), p. 20.

Sharon I. Ritt, "Using Music To Teach Reading Skills in Social Studies," *The Reading Teacher*, XXVII (March 1974), pp. 594-601.

Jerome L. Rodnitzky, "Popular Music in American Studies," *The History Teacher*, VII (August 1974), pp. 503-510.

Charles Seeger, "Folk Music in the Schools of a Highly Industrialized Society," in *The American Folk Scene: Dimensions of the Folksong Revival*, edited by David A. DeTurk and A. Poulin, Jr. (New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1967), pp. 88-94.

Russ Widoe, "Getting Enthused Over Pop Music," *Media and Methods*, XVI (March 1980), pp. 36-38.

[6]Scott Heyman, "And Music," *Music Educators Journal*, LIV (May 1968), pp. 35-38.

Don L. Wulffson, "Music To Teach Reading," *Journal of Reading*, XIV (December 1970), pp. 179-182.
"Youth and Music," in *Values and Youth (Teaching Social Studies in an Age of Crisis—No. 2)*, edited by Robert D. Barr (Washington, D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies, 1971), pp. 99-103.

Another question which arises during any discussion concerning the instructional use of popular music is: "Where can the lyrics of contemporary songs be obtained?" No social studies teacher can be expected to feel totally comfortable when approaching a medium as strange and new as popular recordings. However, this initial insecurity can stimulate professional growth. It can also enable students to assume roles as "experts" in terms of providing non-traditional learning resources for classroom investigation. Aside from relying on student good will, though, teachers will be pleased to discover that the following lyric collections are available at reasonable paperback rates:

Alan Aldridge (ed.), *The Beatles Illustrated Lyrics*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1969.
_____, *The Beatles Illustrated Lyrics—2*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1971.
Bob Atkinson (ed.), *Songs of the Open Road: The Poetry of Folk Rock*. New York: New American Library, 1974.
Chuck Berry—The Golden Decade. New York: Arc Music Corporation, n.d.
Richard Broderick (comp.), *The New York Times 100 Great Country Songs*. New York: Quadrangle Books, 1973.
Bruce L. Chipman (comp.), *Hardening Rock. An Organic Anthology of the Adolescence of Rock 'N Roll*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972.
David Dalton (ed.), *The Rolling Stones: An Unauthorized Biography in Words, Photographs, and Music*. New York: Amsco Music Publishing Company, 1972.
Landon Gerald Dowdey (comp.), *Journey To Freedom: A Casebook with Music*. Chicago: Swallow Press, 1969.
Bob Dylan Song Book. New York: M. Witmark and Sons, n.d.
Tom Glazer (ed.), *Songs of Peace, Freedom, and Protest*. Greenwich, Connecticut: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1970.
Richard Goldstein (ed.), *The Poetry of Rock*. New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1969.
Barbara Farris Graves and Donald J. McBain (eds.), *Lyric Voices: Approaches to the Poetry of Contemporary Song*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1972.
David Morse (comp.), *Grandfather Rock: The New Poetry and the Old*. New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc. 1972.
The Motown Era. New York: Grosset and Dunlap, Inc. 1971.
A.X. Nicholas (ed.), *The Poetry of Soul*. New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1971.
_____ (ed.), *Woke Up This Mornin': Poetry of the Blues*. New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1973.
Carol Offen (ed.), *Country Music: The Poetry*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1977.
Milton Okum (ed.), *Great Songs of Lennon and McCartney*. New York: Quadrangle Press, 1973.
_____ (ed.), *Great Songs . . . of the Sixties*. Chicago: Quadrangle Press, 1970.
_____ (ed.), *The New York Times Country Music's Greatest Songs*. New York: Times Books, 1978.
_____ (ed.), *The New York Times Great Songs of the Seventies*. New York: Times Books, 1977.
Richard Peck (ed.), *Beowulf to Beatles: Approaches to Poetry*. New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1970.
Eric Sackheim (comp.), *The Blues Line: A Collection of Blues Lyrics*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1969.
Louis M. Savary (ed.), *Popular Song and Youth Today: Fifty Songs—Their Meaning and You*. New York: Association Press, 1971.
Jerry Silverman (comp.), *The Liberated Woman's Songbook*. New York: Collier Books, 1971.
The Songs of Paul Simon. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972.
Stephanie Spinner (ed.), *Rock Is Beautiful: An Anthology of American Lyrics, 1953-1968*. New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1970.
Jerry L. Walker (ed.), *Favorite Pop/Rock Lyrics*. New York: Scholastic Book Service, 1969.
_____ (ed.), *Pop/Rock Lyrics 2*. New York: Scholastic Book Service, 1970.
_____ (ed.), *Pop/Lyrics 3*. New York: Scholastic Book Service, 1971.
_____ (ed.), *Pop/Rock Songs of the Earth*. New York: Scholastic Book Service, 1972.

How Can a Social Studies Teacher Introduce Popular Music Resources?

Rather than continuing to outline the theory of using popular music in the social studies classroom, the author provides in the following pages a series of specific teaching strategies which can be employed to motivate student interest. Each recommended instructional unit is thematically organized and headed by a specific question for reflective consideration, along with a set of six to ten concepts which are directly related to each theme. They are also supported by two types of teaching resources—popular music recordings and textbook readings—which have been selected to illustrate the theme and to spark student interest, imagination, and creativity.

I. BLACK LIFE IN AMERICA

Question for Reflective Consideration:

Do lyrics sung by black performers accurately reflect the experiences of contemporary Blacks in the United States?

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

affirmative action
poverty
segregation
ghetto life
welfare system
racial pride
educational opportunity
job discrimination
freedom

Instructional Approach:

Have students listen to the lyrics of songs presented on a black-oriented radio station and on the nationally televised dance show "Soul Train." Instruct the class to list several social and political issues which are verbalized by popular singers who are admired by Blacks. Then ask students if the attitudes and values expressed by black singers are similar to or different from those voiced by popular white singers.

Songs and Performers:

B.B. King, "Why I Sing the Blues"
Wilson Pickett, "Ninety-Nine and Half (Won't Do)"
Les McCann, "Comment"
Bobby Bland, "Stormy Monday Blues"
Nina Simone, "Trouble in Mind"
The Temptations, "Masterpiece"
Diana Ross and the Supremes, "I'm Livin' in Shame"
Stevie Wonder, "I Wish"
Gladys Knight and the Pips, "Midnight Train to Georgia"
Chuck Berry, "Back in the U.S.A."
Charles Wright and the Watts 103rd Street Rhythm Band, "Express Yourself"
Sly and the Family Stone, "Stand"
The Isley Brothers, "Livin' in the Life"
The Temptations, "Papa Was a Rollin' Stone"
Les McCann and Eddie Harris, "Compared to What?"
Lou Rawls, "Tobacco Road"
Stevie Wonder, "Livin' for the City"

Reading Resources:

B. Lee Cooper, "Popular Music: An Untapped Resource for Teaching Contemporary Black History," *Journal of Negro Education*, XLVII (Winter 1979), pp. 20-36.
Phyl Garland, *The Sound of Soul*. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1969.

Ulf Hannerz, "The Meaning of 'Soul'," in *The Private Side of American History: Readings in Everyday Life*, Vol. II edited by Thomas R. Frazier (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1975), pp. 336-347.
LeRoi Jones, *Blues People: Negro Music in White America*. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1963.
Frank Kofsky, *Black Nationalism and the Revolution in Music*. New York: Pathfinder Press, Inc., 1970.

II. RELIGIOUS IMAGES

Question for Reflective Consideration:

Why do popular singers so frequently employ religious themes and images in the lyrics of their hit tunes?

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

predestination
brotherhood
gospel themes
ethics
morality
ecumenicism
abortion
moral majority
social gospel

Instructional Approach:

Have each student construct a list of popular songs which contain religious ideas, themes, or images in their lyrics. Invite two local clergymen to speak to the class on the topic of "Religious Involvement in Contemporary Social Life." Have the ministers join the class in evaluating the varying meanings of "religion" contained in the songs which the students have compiled.

Songs and Performers:

A. *Traditional Lyrics*
Judy Collins, "Amazing Grace"
The Edwin Hawkins Singers, "Oh Happy Day"
Pete Seeger, "Turn, Turn, Turn"
Roy Hamilton, "You'll Never Walk Alone"
B. *Salvation*
Manhattan Transfer, "Operator"
Impressions, "People Get Ready"
Norman Greenbaum, "Spirit in the Sky"
Pacific Gas and Electric, "Are You Ready?"
C. *Brotherhood*
The Staple Singers, "I'll Take You There"
Simon and Garfunkel, "Bridge Over Troubled Water"
The Hollies, "He Ain't Heavy . . . He's My Brother"
D. *Social Criticism*
Joan Baez, "With God on Our Side"
Simon and Garfunkel, "7 O'Clock News/Silent Night"
Bob Dylan, "You Gotta Serve Somebody"

Reading Resources:

B. Lee Cooper, "Rock Music and Religious Education: A Proposed Synthesis," *Religious Education*, LXX (May-June 1975), pp. 289-299.
Landon Gerald Dowdey (comp.), *Journey to Freedom: A Casebook with Music*. Chicago: Swallow Press, 1969.
Tony Heilbut, *The Gospel Sound: Good News and Bad Times*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971.
Jerome L. Rodnitzky, "The New Revivalism: American Protest Songs, 1945-1968," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, LXX (Winter, 1971), pp. 13-21.

III. PROBLEMS OF YOUTH

Question for Reflective Consideration:

How should young people respond to personal problems and conflicts which occur in their lives?

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

maturation
responsibility
in loco parentis
independence
economic security
age discrimination
parental authority
identity
social pressure

Instructional Approach:

Ask students to assemble several sets of popular song lyrics which accurately depict their feelings about their personal problems and their observations about changing values in contemporary American society.

Songs and Performers:

A. *Self-Image*
Janis Ian, "At Seventeen"
Helen Reddy, "I Am Woman"
Lou Rawls, "A Natural Man"
Paul Simon, "Late in the Evening"
Alice Cooper, "Eighteen"
Chuck Berry, "Almost Grown"
Billy Joel, "My Life"
B. *Parental Authority*
Paul Simon, "Me and Julio Down by the Schoolyard"
Coasters, "Yakety Yak"
Eddie Cochran, "Summertime Blues"
Janis Joplin, "Down on Me"
Loggins and Messina, "Your Mama Don't Dance"
C. *Personal Relationships*
Carly Simon, "You're So Vain"
Elvis Presley, "Suspicious Minds"
Neil Sedaka, "Breaking Up Is Hard to Do"
The Rolling Stones, "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction"
Billy Joel, "Just the Way You Are"
D. *Social Pressures*
Janis Ian, "Society's Child"
Tommy James and the Shondells, "I Think We're Alone Now"
Gene Pitney, "Town Without Pity"
The Crystals, "He's a Rebel"
Ray Charles, "Sticks and Stones"
Supertramp, "The Logical Song"

Reading Resources:

B. Lee Cooper, "Searching for Personal Identity in the Social Studies: Male and Female Perspectives in Contemporary Lyrics," *International Journal of Instructional Media*, VI (1978-79), pp. 351-359.
Kenneth Keniston, *The Uncommitted: Alienated Youth in American Society*. New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1965.
Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in An Age of Diminishing Expectations*. New York: Warner Books, 1979.
Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969.
William W. Wattenberg, *The Adolescent Years* (2nd ed.). New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1973.
Daniel Yankelovich, "The New Naturalism," in *The Changing Values on Campus* (New York: Pocket Books, 1972), pp. 167-185.

IV. HISTORICAL IMAGES

Question for Reflective Consideration:

How accurate are popular songs in their depiction of historical events?

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

causation
facts
determinism
interpretations
propaganda
stereotypes
"great man" theory
myths
images
chronology

Instructional Approach:

Have students discuss the oral history contained in traditional ballads which praised the heroic deeds of Robin Hood and John Henry and in protest songs which condemned big business' hostility toward unionism ("Joe

Hill") in nineteenth-century America. Then ask the class to reflect on the historical accuracy of the events depicted in contemporary songs.

Records and Performers:

Historical Topics and Popular Music Resources

The Battle of New Orleans: Johnny Horton, "The Battle of New Orleans"
A Civil War Incident: Joan Baez, "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down"
Labor Problems in Coal Mining Communities: Tennessee Ernie Ford, "Sixteen Tons"
John F. Kennedy During World War II: Jimmy Dean, "P.T. 109"
The Assassinations of Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., and John F. Kennedy: Dion, "Abraham, Martin, and John"
The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: Tommy Cash, "Six White Horses"
The Valor of Vietnam Soldiers: Barry Sadler, "The Ballad of the Green Berets"
The Kent State Incident: Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, "Ohio"
The Trial of the "Chicago 7": Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, "Chicago"

Reading Resources:

B. Lee Cooper, "Folk History, Alternative History, and Future History," *Teaching History: A Journal of Methods*, II (Spring 1977), pp. 56-62.
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V. PERSONAL PROBLEMS

Question for Reflective Consideration:

How should an individual react when he or she is a victim of social discrimination or public hyprocrisy in American society?

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

prejudice	powerlessness
alienation	materialism
discrimination	inequity
segregation	hypocrisy
isolation	

Instructional Approach:

Develop lyrical biographies of socially alienated, politically powerless individuals. Have students analyze their situations, provide suggestions about resolving their problems, and state how they would respond to similar problems in their own lives.

Songs and Performers:

A. *Prejudice and Social Tyranny*
Sonny Charles, "Black Pearl"
Janis Ian, "Society's Child"
Peter, Paul, and Mary, "Blowin' in the Wind"
Timmy Thomas, "Why Can't We Live Together"
O.C. Smith, "Hickory Holler's Tramp"
The Raiders, "Indian Reservation (The Lament of the Cherokee Reservation Indian)"
B.B. King, "Why I Sing the Blues"
Helen Reddy, "I Am Woman"
Sandy Posey, "Single Girl"

B. *Personal Alienation and Public Hypocrisy*
The Beatles, "Eleanor Rigby"
Three Dog Night, "Easy To Be Hard"
Simon and Garfunkel, "A Most Peculiar Man"
The Beatles, "Nowhere Man"
The Who, "Won't Get Fooled Again"
Lou Rawls, "Natural Man"
Joe South and the Believers, "Games People Play"
Ray Stevens, "Mr. Businessman"
Les McCann and Eddie Harris, "Compared to What?"

Reading Resources:

Eric Berne, *Games People Play*. New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1964.
B. Lee Cooper, "The Image of the Outsider in Contemporary Lyrics," *Journal of Popular Culture*, XII (Summer 1978), pp. 168-178.
Simone de Beauvoir and Betty Friedan, "Sex, Society, and the Female Dilemma," *Saturday Review*, II (June 14, 1975), pp. 10-20ff.
Frederick Russell Eggan, *The American Indian: Perspectives for the Study of Social Change*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1966.
Charles E. Silberman, *Crisis in Black and White*, New York: Random House, 1964.

VI. WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Question for Reflective Consideration:

Has the rise of the female superstar in popular music affected positively the status of the women's liberation movement in the United States?

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

sexism	political influence
discrimination	E.R.A.
awareness	liberation
affirmative action	identity
equal opportunity	

Instructional approach:

Have the class construct a list of contemporary female singing stars. Assign teams of three students to investigate a female singer's personal background, the history of her recording success, and the social and political themes which can be found in her songs. In addition to the singers listed below, include: Buffy Sainte-Marie, Joni Mitchell, Peggy Lee, Carole King, Karen Carpenter, Bonnie Bramlett, Janis Joplin, Roberta Flack, Mary Travers, Toni Tennille, Marie Osmond, Bette Midler, and Natalie Cole.

Records and Performers:

A. *Liberation*
The Stone Poneys, "Different Drum"
Helen Reddy, "I Am Woman"
Foreigner, "Women"
B. *Male Chauvinism*
Linda Ronstadt, "When Will I Be Loved"
Carly Simon, "You're So Vain"
The Marvellettes, "Playboy"
C. *Social Commentary*
Odetta, "With God on Our Side"
Joni Mitchell, "Big Yellow Taxi"
Joan Baez, "We Shall Overcome"
D. *Sexual Responsibility*
Jean Knight, "Mr. Big Stuff"
Diana Ross and the Supremes, "Love Child"
Bettye Swann, "Don't Touch Me"
E. *Male-Female Relations*
Janis Joplin, "Me and Bobby McGee"
Aretha Franklin, "Respect"
Gladys Knight and the Pips, "I Heard It Through the Grapevine"
Barbra Streisand and Neil Diamond, "You Don't Bring Me Flowers"

Reading Resources:

B. Lee Cooper, "Women's Studies and Popular Music: Using Audio Resources in Social Studies Instruction," *The History and Social Science Teacher*, XIV (Fall 1978), pp. 29-40.
Noel Coppage, "Joni Mitchell: Innocence on a Spree," *Stereo Review*, XXXVI (April 1976), pp. 64-67.
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Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977.
Deborah Landau, *Janis Joplin: Her Life and Times*. New York: Paperback Library, 1971.
Charles Morse and Ann Morse, *Carly Simon*. Mankato, Minnesota: Creative Educational Society, Inc., 1974.
James T. Olsen, *Aretha Franklin*. Mankato, Minnesota: Creative Educational Society, Inc., 1974.
Earl Paige *et al.*, "Diana: A Billboard Special Supplement," *Billboard* Magazine, (March 20, 1976), pp. 1-72.
Jerome L. Rodnitzky, "Songs of Sisterhood: The Music of Women's Liberation," *Popular Music and Society*, IV (1975), pp. 77-85.
William A. Sievert, "For Every Bob Dylan, A Joni Mitchell," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, XI (January 12, 1976), p. 17.
Jerry Silverman (comp.), *The Liberated Woman's Songbook*. New York: Collier Books, 1971.

VII. TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

Question for Reflective Consideration:

How has technological change in electronic equipment during the past thirty years altered the American music industry?

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

microphones
amplification
earphones
multi-track tape
recording techniques
stereophonic sound
turntables
acoustic guitar
quadrophonics
speakers
high fidelity

Instructional Strategy:

Have each student develop a list of technological advances which have influenced the production of contemporary music. Invite a music teacher and a physics instructor to serve as guest lecturers and discussion leaders on the topics of "New Sounds" and "New Sound-Making Devices." Also invite members of a local rock band to demonstrate their craft and to illustrate the sound variations between electronic and non-electronic musical instruments.

Songs and Performers:

A. *Acoustic Versus Electronic Sound by the Same Artist*
Muddy Waters, "Hoochie Coochie Man"
(from *Heavy Heads*, Chess Records, LPS-1522)
Muddy Waters, "Hoochie Coochie Man"
(from *Electric Mud*, Cadet Concept, LPS-314)
B. *Amplified Remakes of Traditional Hits*
"Rock and Roll Music": Chuck Berry (Chess Records—1957); The Beach Boys (Brother/Reprise Records—1976)
"Roll Over, Beethoven": Chuck Berry (Chess Records—1956); The Electric Light Orchestra (United Artists—1973)
C. *Unique Sounds on Records*
The Beach Boys, "Good Vibrations"
Tommy James and the Shondells, "Mirage"
D. *Cut-and-Paste Comedy Recordings*
Dixie Goodman, "Mr. Jaws"
Buchanan and Goodman, "Flying Saucer"

Reading Resources:

Ivan Berger, "One Hundred Years of Recording," *Stereo Review*, XXXIX (July 1977), pp. 62-65.
Faubion Bowers, "The Recording That Ended World War II," *High Fidelity*, XXVII (October 1977), pp. 87-90.
Richard Robinson, *Electronic Rock: The Rock Musicians' Guide to Guitars and Amplifiers*. New York: Pyramid Books, 1971.
C. A. Schicke, *Revolution in Sound: A Biography of the Recording Industry*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974.
Graham Vulliamy and Ed Lee (eds.), *Pop Music in School*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1976.
Herbert H. Wise (ed.), *Professional Rock and Roll: A Complete Guide to the Electric Band*. New York: Collier Books, 1967.

VIII. SOCIAL COMMENTARY

Question for Reflective Consideration:

Why have the writers and singers of popular songs elected to emphasize controversial social and political topics in their lyrics?

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

controversial issues
race relations
social criticism
ecology
muckraking
media influence
drug abuse
political cynicism
war

Instructional Approach

Have each student assemble a list of four to six songs which illustrate varying points of view on a significant social or political issue.

Records and Performers:

A. *Drug Abuse*
Steppenwolf, "The Pusher"
Jefferson Airplane, "White Rabbit"
Canned Heat, "Amphetamine Annie"
The Association, "Along Comes Mary"
Paul Revere and the Raiders, "Kicks"
The Jimi Hendrix Experience, "Purple Haze"
The Rolling Stones, "Mother's Little Helper"
B. *Environmental Protection*
Marvin Gaye, "Mercy, Mercy Me (The Ecology)"
The Monkees, "Pleasant Valley Sunday"
Three Dog Night, "The Family of Man"
Tom Paxton, "Whose Garden Was This?"
Cat Stevens, "Where Do The Children Play?"
Joni Mitchell, "Big Yellow Taxi"
Tom Lehrer, "Pollution"
Stephen Stills, "Ecology Song"
C. *Race Relations*
Elvis Presley, "In The Ghetto"
James Brown, "Say It Loud—I'm Black and I'm Proud"
Neil Young, "Southern Man"
The Impressions, "Choice of Color"
Curtis Mayfield, "Mighty Mighty, Spade and Whitey"
Sly and the Family Stone, "Don't Call Me Nigger, Whitey"
The Rolling Stones, "Brown Sugar"
D. *War*
Bob Seeger System, "2 + 2 = ?"
Country Joe and the Fish, "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die Rag"
Barry Sadler, "Ballad of the Green Berets"
Edwin Starr, "War"
Phil Ochs, "I Ain't Marching Anymore"
Leon Russell, "Give Peace a Chance"
Bob Dylan, "Masters of War"

Reading Resources:

B. Lee Cooper, "Teaching American History Through Popular Music," *AHA Newsletter*, XIV (October 1976), pp. 3-5.
R. Serge Denisoff, "Folk-Rock: Folk Music, Protest, or Commercialism?" *Journal of Popular Culture*, III (Fall 1969), pp. 214-230.
Jonathan Eisen (ed.), *The Age of Rock: Sounds of the American Cultural Revolution*. New York: Vintage Books, 1970.
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IX. FUTURE CONCERNS

Question for Reflective Consideration:

According to the commentaries of contemporary singers and songwriters, what are the key social and political problems which must be faced by Americans during the coming decades?

Concepts/Issues To Be Investigated:

future shock
planning
energy
prediction
population
automation
prophecy
social change
international conflict

Instructional Approach:

Have each student select a popular recording that deals with an unresolved social or political issue which is likely to have an impact on future society. Discuss the specific topic after listening to the record and then evaluate the significance of the issue and place it on a rank-ordered scale of concern with each of the concerns identified by the other students in the class.

Records and Performers:

A. *Race Relations*
   Three Dog Night, "Black and White"
   Timmy Thomas, "Why Can't We Live Together?"
   Sly and the Family Stone, "Everyday People"
B. *Social Change*
   Sam Cooke, "A Change is Gonna Come"
   Bob Dylan, "The Times They Are A-Changin'"
   Max Frost and the Troopers, "Shape of Things to Come"
C. *Political Hypocrisy*
   The Undisputed Truth, "Smiling Faces Sometimes"
   Barry McGuire, "Eve of Destruction"
   Steppenwolf, "Monster"
D. *War*
   Edwin Starr, "War"
   Buffy Sainte-Marie, "Universal Soldier"
   Bob Dylan, "Masters of War"
E. *Fear of a Police State*
   Lee Michaels, "Mad Dog"
   Buffalo Springfield, "For What It's Worth"
   Canned Heat, "My Crime"
F. *Automation and Alienation*
   The Temptations, "Ball of Confusion"
   Zager and Evans, "In The Year 2525"
   Five Man Electrical Band, "Signs"

Reading Resources:

B. Lee Cooper, "Futurescope," *Audiovisual Instruction*, XXI (January 1976), pp. 42-48.
M. J. Dunstan and P. Garland, *Worlds in the Making: Probes for Students of the Future*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970.
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Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock*. New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1970.
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Conclusion

The ideas presented in popular songs should be examined in social studies classes because of the impact that contemporary songwriters such as John Lennon, Joni Mitchell, Neil Diamond, Bob Dylan, Stevie Wonder, Paul McCartney, and Pete Townshend have had on the shaping of American culture. The attitudes and values portrayed in modern tunes demand the reflective consideration of students because they strike at the heart of the major social and political issues of our time: ecology, women's liberation, political cynicism, militarism, drug abuse, and others. Likewise, the literary images and linguistic configurations presented in popular lyrics are as fascinating as communication vehicles, particularly when they reveal rich patterns of attitudes, values, and beliefs. In short, contemporary songs are invaluable tools for pursuing the twin educational goals of self-knowledge and social analysis.

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Ray Charles, *A 25th Anniversary Show Business Salute to Ray Charles: His All-Time Great Performances* (ABCH-731). New York: ABC Records, Inc., 1971.
Cruisin' The Fifties and Sixties: A History of Rock and Roll Radio—13 volumes (INCM 2000-2012). Sunnyvale, California: Increase Records, 1970 (Vol. 1956-62), 1972 (Vol. 1955 and 1963), and 1973 (Vol. 1964-67).
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Carole King, *Tapestry* (SP 77009). Hollywood, California: A & M Records, 1971.
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_____, *Curtis Mayfield: His Early Years With the Impressions* (ABCX 780/2). Los Angeles: ABC Records, Inc., 1973.
Phil Ochs, *Chords of Fame* (A&M SP 4599). Beverly Hills, California: A & M Records, Inc., 1977.
Rock 'N' Soul: The History of Rock in the Pre-Beatle Decade of Rock—9 volumes (ABCX 1955-63). Los Angeles, California: ABC Records, Inc., 1973.
The Rolling Stones, *Hot Rocks 1964-1971* (London 2PS 606-7). New York: ABKCO Records, Inc. (London), 1972.
Pete Seeger, *Pete Seeger's Greatest Hits* (CS 9416) New York: Columbia Records/CBS, Inc., n.d.
Simon and Garfunkel, *Sounds of Silence* (CS 9269). New York: Columbia Records, 1965.
Paul Simon, *Still Crazy After All These Years* (PC 33540). New York: Columbia Records/CBS, Inc., 1975.
The Who, *Meaty Beaty Big and Bouncy* (DL 79184). Universal City, California: MCA Records, Inc., 1971.
Woodstock (SD 3-500). New York: Cotillion Records, 1970.

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